

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DHAHRA 01277 100856Z

12

ACTION EB-07

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FM AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

TO USDOC WASHDC

AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY CASABLANCA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5030

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

RUQMK

7&AMEMBASSY KUWAIT 1103

UNCLAS DHAHRAN 1277

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, SA

SUBJECT: PORT DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR -- APPRAISAL
OF DHAHRAN VIS BJ

1. SUMMARY: TWO-DAY SEMINAR (PRECEDED BY DAY DEVOTED TO BRIEFING SEMINAR SPEAKERS) WAS WELL RECEIVED IN IEASTERN PROVINCE. ATTENDANCE AT SEMINAR WAS BETTER THAN ANTICIPATED AND GUESTS INCLUDED MEN DRAWN FROM ALL POSSIBLE MARKETING AREAS OF INTEREST TO SEMINAR MEMBERS. ALL COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES MAKING UP SEMINAR APPEAR TO HAVE MET OR TO HAVE EXCEEDED THEIR EXPECTATIONS FOR DHAHRAN VISIT, WITH ONE MEMBER UNCOVERING A SPARKING NEW SAG PROJECT AND APPARENTLY VIRTUALLY ASSURED OF LANDING IT FOR HIS COMPANY2; POST ASKS, AS ACTION REQUEST, THAT COPIES OF SEMINAR PAPERS BE AIR POUCHED TO COVER POST-CONFERENCE REQUESTS. END SUMMARY.
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 DHAHRA 01277 100856Z

2. SUBJECT SEMINAR, HELD IN EASTERN PROVINCE PORT CITY OF DAMMAM, DREW LARGER THAN ANTICIPATED AUDIENCE. SEMINAR GUESTS CAME FROM ALL IMPORTANT SAG AGENCIES AND COMPANIES HERE CONNECTED WITH PORT MANAGEMENT, DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISION. MOST SAG AGENCIES SENT TWO OR MORE REPRESENTATIVES, AND SENIOR RESIDENT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WERE ALSO IN ATTENDANCE. SEMINAR WAS OPENED BY DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF SAUDI GOVERNMENT RAILROAD ORGANIZATION (THE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATION OF DAMMAM PORT), AND CLOSED BY PRESIDENT OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF EASTERN PROVINCE (THE AGENCY WHICH PROVIDED THE VENUE FOR THE SEMINAR SESSIONS). FIRST DAY OF SEMINAR HAD ATTENDANCE OF 60 GUESTS WHILE SECOND DAY OF SEMINAR DREW 40. DECLINE ON SECOND DAY WAS FORECAST SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE SEMINAR AS SEVERAL GUESTS, WHO TRAVELLED MANY MILES TO ATTEND SEMINAR, FRANKLY ADMITTED THAT THEY COULD NOT SPARE MORE THAN ONE DAY FROM THEIR WORK. RECEPTION HOSTED BY CONSUL GENERAL, HELD EVENING OF FIRST DAY OF SEMINAR, WAS VERY WELL ATTENDED -- DRAWING MANY OF THE GUESTS AT SEMINAR AS WELL AS MANY OTHERS, SUCH AS COMMANDER OF SAUDI NAVY, WHO WERE USEFUL FOR SEMINAR MEMBERS TO MEET AND ENGAGE IN INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS.

3. MOST SEMINAR MEMBERS ARRIVED FULL DAY IN ADVANCE OF SEMINAR OPENING, AND THE DAY, THE MUSLIM SABBATH, WAS USED TO INTRODUCE MEMBERS TO SAUDI ARABIA AND ITS PORTS AS WELL AS TO BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED WITH EACH OTHER. MORNING BRIEFING ARRANGED BY CONGEN INCLUDED MEMBER OF SAG ROYAL COMMISSION ON JUBAIL WHO GAVE DETAILED PRESENTATION OF SEAPORT COMPLEX WHICH HOLDS MUCH PROMISE

FOR AMERICAN COMPANIES SUPPLYING GOODS AND SERVICES TO OCEAN PORTS.

AFTERNOON WAS USED TO TOUR DAMMAM PORT AND, LATER AT INFORMAL SUPPER HOSTED BY CONGEN, SEMINAR MEMBERS HAD CHANCE TO MEET RESIDENT US CORP OF ENGINEERS COLONEL IN CHARGE OF TWO SAG PORT PROJECTS BEING CONSTRUCTED ON SAUDI ARABIA'S EAST COAST.

4. POST BELIEVES MEMBERS OF SEMINAR MET OR EXCEEDED THEIR EXPECTATIONS HERE. FOUR COMPANIES DEVOTED TIME TO NURTURING OR OTHERWISE HAVING FRANK DISCUSSIONS WITH THEIR AGENTS IN EASTERN PROVINCE WHICH WILL LEAD, HOPEFULLY, TO GREATER SALES. ONE COMPANY WORKED VERY HARD TOWARDS GOAL OF MAKING A STRONG ENTRY INTO MARKET WHICH IT HAD NEVER TRIED BEFORE TO PENETRATE. IN PROCESS
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PAGE 03 DHAHRA 01277 100856Z

POST INTRODUCED IT TO SAUDI COMPANY WHICH IS AGGRESSIVELY TRYING TO LAND \$62 MILLION CONTRACT WITH SAG FOR SOPHISTICATED PORT EQUIPMENT WHICH THE US COMPANY MANUFACTURES. ANOTHER COMPANY FREW BEAD ON PORT MANAGEMENT CONTRACT WHICH WILL SOON COME UP FOR BID

WHILE ANOTHER COMPANY APPEARS ALMOST ASSURUJHHSLANDING AN IMPORTANT CONTRACT WITH ANOTHER SAG AGENCY. LATTER PROJECT WAS JUST EMERGING FROM EMBRYO STAGE AT TIME OF SEMINAR AND COMPANY REP WAS FORTUNATE TO BE ON THE SPOT WITH THE RIGHT LINE OF PRODUCTS.

5. COMMENT: WITH BENEFIT OF HINDSIGHT, POST COMMENDS SEMINAR APPROACH AS USEFUL WAY FOR NEW-TO-MARKET COMPANIES TO APPROACH THIS MIDDLE EAST MARKET. POST WAS HIGHLY COMPLIMENTED BY SEMINAR GUESTS FOR STAGING THIS TRADE PROMOTION EVENT WITH SUCH TOPICAL SUBJECTS REVIEWED. ALL CREDIT GOES TO REPRESENTATIVES OF COMPANIES WHICH MADE UP THE SEMINAR. THEY ARE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE MARKET HERE, OBVIOUSLY KNEW THEIR SUBJECT MATTER, AND, MOST IMPORTANT, NEVER SPOKE DOWN TO THEIR AUDIENCE. SEMINAR LEADER ARMSTRONG WAS A PERFECT CHOICE FOR HIS TASK. NEVERTHELESS, WE MAKE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATION WHICH MAY BE USEFUL TO INFO AS WELL AS ACTION ADDRESSEES IN STRENGTHENING THE SEMINAR CONCEPT AS A UFFFUL MARKETING INSTRUMENT.

A) HOLD SEMINAR TO SIX PAPERS AND PROGRAM IT FOR NO MORE THAN ONE-DAY SESSION. PAPERS SHOULD BE 45 MINUTES (RATHER THAN 30 MINUTES AS WAS CASE FOR TIES SEMINAR) AS PARTICIPATION FROM FLOOR JUST DID NOT MATERIALIZE.

B) SUGGEST PAPERS ALSO TREAT SPECIFIC SUBJECTS RATHER THAN LIMIT THEMSELVES TO BROAD TREATMENT OF FIELD THEY CHARGEJ WITH PRESENTING. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE MEMBER'S PAPER DISCUSSED FORKLIFTS - A SUBJECT FAMILIAR TO NEARLY ALL SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS. HIS PAPER WAS CLEAR, WELL-PREPARED, AND COULD NOT HAVE BEEN BETTER IF AUDIENCE HAD ONLY FRAGMENTED KNOWLEDGE OF FORKLIFTS. HOWEVER, IF PAPER HAD ALSO GONE INTO WAYS TRAINING OF DRIVERS OR TECHNIQUES USED TO REDUCE FORLIFT DOWN TIME, FOR EXAMPLE, GREATER INTEREST IN SUBJECT WOULD HAVE BEEN GENERATED. LEST WE APPEAR TO BE CONCERNED WITH CONTENT OF ONLY ONE PAPER -- WE NOTE THAT OTHER PAPERS READ AT SEMINAR HAD THE SAME WEAKNESSES.

C) BELIEVE A WELL-DESIGNED PRINTED BROCHURE ANNOUNCING THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 04 DHAHRA 01277 100856Z

SEMINAR -- MADE AVAILABLE TO THE POST A FULL MONTH BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE SEMINAR -- WOULD HAVE MADE A BETTER OPENING IMPACT ON MARKET. AS IT WAS, POST WAS FORCED TO RELY ON DITTOED SHEET (OF ITS OWN MANUFACTURE) WHICH SUGGESTED THAT SEMINAR MIGHT BE AMATEURISH EVENT, WHICH IT WAS NOT.

D) PROVIDE POST, IN ADVANCE, WITH 100 COPIES OF EACH PAPER TO BE GIVEN. PARTICIPANTS, PARTICULARLY THOSE WITH LOW ENGLISH FLUENCY,

REALLY NEED A COPY OF THEIR OWN WHICH THEY CAN RETAIN AND REFER TO
LATER -- AN EVENT WHICH WILL AGAIN PLACE THE COMPANY'S NAME BEFORE
THE READER.

ACTION REQUESTED: POST HAS RECEIVED GOOD RESPONSE FOR COPIES OF
PAPER
AND WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING SIX XEROXED COPIES OF EACH
PAPER (APART FROM HYDRAUTICS PAPER, WHICH WAS PROVIDED BY
COMPANY RE IN AMPLE QUANTITIES). PLEASE AIR POUCH THESE COPIES
GASAP.
BUSHNELL

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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